

**Committee for a Better Environment**  
**Davis Hall, College Park**  
**Final - January 27, 2014**  
**7:00 PM**

<u>Members</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Suchitra Balachandran	X	
Gemma Evans		X
Stephen Jascourt		X
Benjamin Mellman	X	
Janis Oppelt	X	
Kennis Termini		X
Donna Weene	X	
Macrina Xavier		X

Also present:

Steve Beavers, City Liaison, Bill Gardiner, Assistant City Manager, and Denise M. Palmer, Contract Secretary.

Guest: Seth Weene and Ben Guevara

Ms. Oppelt called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

**1. Review Meeting Minutes 10/28 and 11/25**

The approval of the minutes from October 28, 2013 and November 25, 2013 meeting was tabled until a quorum is present.

**2. Financial Report**

Mr. Beavers reported that as of January 6, 2014, CBE spent \$437.37 from its budget and currently has \$10,524 available.

**3. Events**

**a. Environmental Film Series - update**

Ms. Oppelt reported that the next environmental film series will be held on Saturday, February 1, 2014 in Council Chambers.

**b. Upcoming**

The next scheduled film will be held on March 1, 2014. Ms. Oppelt will inform the committee of the topic.

#### **4. Other - Old Business**

**a. Meters – Kill-A-Watt & Temp/Heat Measuring**

The Kill-a-watt meters and the temperature/heat measuring units are available for use. Two each are available at City Hall and Davis Hall.

**b. City Website (Updates Needed?)**

Ms. Oppelt indicated that she reviewed the material on the City's website regarding CBE. The website material and the CBE brochures need to be updated.

**c. Volunteer/Committee Recruitment**

Ms. Oppelt indicated that she will get together with Ms. Balachandran and Mr. Mellman to finalize the letter to recruit volunteers and new CBE committee members.

Mr. Guevara, guest, questioned what is CBE's main focus. Ms. Oppelt and Ms. Balachandran reported of the activities that CBE has been engaged in and the recent workshops that have been held. Mr. Guevara indicated that utilizing interns for different CBE projects should be looked into as well. Ms. Oppelt and Mr. Mellman responded to his question and reported on how the use of interns for credit hours has to be tracked and supervised and the project of where we were able to use an intern for the Emissions report and the outcome of that project.

#### **5. New business**

**a. Permaculture**

The committee discussed recycling and "pay as you go." Ms. Balachandran reported and answered question from Mr. Gardiner on whether the city accepts construction waste. Ms. Oppelt and Mr. Beavers attended recent Tree & Landscape Board meeting. There was a suggestion for a location on the trolley trail between Greenbelt Road and Rhode Island Avenue as a pilot program. Mr. Beavers reported that Behnke's Nurseries had been discussed and he had information from their website and circulated the information. He thinks Behnke's could do something for under \$10,000. Ms. Oppelt suggested using the line item in CBE's budget of \$2,500 for starters. There was discussion on who will maintain it. Mr. Beavers indicated that Brenda Alexander from Tree & Landscape suggested using Boy Scouts for the planting; the city will water and, of course, longterm maintenance is a concern and cost. Mr. Beavers reported that educational signage will be attached to the trees and the fruit trees are available to pick by residents. One concern, of course, will be fruit droppings from the trees.

**b. Pesticide/Herbicide Ban – Takoma Park**

Ms. Balachandran brought this topic up at the last meeting. Takoma Park is the first city in the U.S. to ban pesticides for individuals to use. She circulated the code to committee members today. It has not gone into effect yet. The ban is on pesticides that EPA considers carcinogenic. Some 30 known pesticides, 17 are known carcinogenics, and there is a list of them on the EPA website. She gave a full report on it and suggested following up with what Takoma Park is doing and monitor their success. Ms. Oppelt suggested conducting a workshop on pesticides and follow up with lawn care, etc. Ms. Balachandran suggested a brochure on pesticides and how their use affects humans. Mr. Guevara, guest, suggested checking with local companies that use pesticides in College Park and use them as a case study. Mr. Beavers will get in touch with Tree & Landscape Board to review the history of the pesticide ban.

Ms. Balachandran reported there is a draft bill this Friday before the Senate on genetically engineered food. It was sponsored by Karen Montgomery from District 19 from Montgomery County.

Ms. Oppelt suggested that CBE expand the compost bin program.

Mr. Gardiner inquired about community gardens. Ms. Oppelt explained that it did not work because of the complaints from neighbors. Mr. Guevara suggested the site by College Park Pool since there is a lot of land there and it is tiered. Mr. Gardiner suggested storm water regulations could be a new workshop for CBE to look into.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45pm. The next meeting is scheduled for February 24, 2014.

Minutes prepared by Denise M. Palmer, Contract Secretary